CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for fulfilling client tool service requests by utilizing a tool service layer, said method comprising the steps of:

(1) receiving a tool service request from a client;

(2) identifying one or more tool service layer functions capable of being provided by said tool service layer, wherein said identified one or more tool service layer functions are required to fulfill said tool service request; and

(3) performing said identified one or more tool service layer functions, thereby fulfilling said client tool service request.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said tool service request may be fulfilled by one or more tool functions provided by one or more tools in conjunction with said one or more tool service layer functions, and wherein said tool service request does not reference said one or more tool functions.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein said tool service request does not reference said one or more tool service layer functions.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of identifying further comprises identifying a workflow for executing an automation scenario.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein said tool service request may be fulfilled by one or more tool functions provided by one or more tools in conjunction with said one or more tool service layer functions, and wherein said step of identifying further comprises reviewing configuration information describing tool functions capable of being provided by said one or more tools.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of identifying further comprises reviewing configuration information describing tool service layer functions capable of being provided by said tool service layer.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of identifying further comprises reviewing configuration information describing workflow definitions.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein said tool service request may be fulfilled by one or more tool functions provided by one or more tools in conjunction with said one or more tool service layer functions, and wherein said method further comprises the step of converting said client request into a format understandable by said one or more tools.

9. A system for fulfilling client tool service requests by utilizing a tool service layer, said system comprising:

a memory;

a processor in communication with said memory, wherein said processor is configured to receive a tool service request from a client via a routing device;

wherein said tool services layer is implemented in said processor and is configured to identify one or more tool service layer functions required to fulfill said tool service request; and

wherein said processor is configured to cause said identified one or more tool service layer functions to be performed by said tool services layer to fulfill said client tool service request.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein said tool service request may be fulfilled by one or more tool functions provided by one or more tools in conjunction with said one or more tool service layer functions, and wherein said tool service request does not reference said one or more tool functions.

11. The system of claim 9, wherein said tool service request does not reference said one or more tool service layer functions.

12. The system of claim 9, wherein said processor is capable of identifying a workflow for executing an automation scenario.

13. The system of claim 9, wherein said tool service request may be fulfilled by one or more tool functions provided by one or more tools in conjunction with said one or more tool service layer functions, and wherein said processor is capable of reviewing configuration information describing tool functions capable of being provided by said one or more tools.

14. The system of claim 9, wherein said processor is capable of reviewing configuration information describing tool service layer functions capable of being provided by said tool service layer.

15. The system of claim 9, wherein said processor is capable of reviewing configuration information describing workflow definitions.

16. The system of claim 9, wherein said tool service request may be fulfilled by one or more tool functions provided by one or more tools in conjunction with said one or more tool service layer functions, and wherein said processor is capable of converting said client request into a format understandable by said one or more tools.

17. A computer program embodied on a computer readable medium for fulfilling client tool service requests by utilizing a tool service layer, said computer program comprising:

computer readable instructions for receiving a tool service request from a client;

computer readable instructions for identifying one or more tool service layer functions capable of being provided by said tool service layer, wherein said identified one or more tool service layer functions are required to fulfill said tool service request; and

computer readable instructions for performing said identified one or more tool service layer functions, thereby fulfilling said client tool service request.

18. The computer program of claim 17, wherein said tool service request may be fulfilled by one or more tool functions provided by one or more tools in conjunction with said one or more tool service layer functions, and wherein said tool service request does not reference said one or more tool functions.

19. The computer program of claim 17, wherein said tool service request does not reference said one or more tool service layer functions.

20. The computer program of claim 17, wherein said computer readable instructions for identifying further comprises computer readable instructions for identifying a workflow for executing an automation scenario.

21. The computer program of claim 17, wherein said tool service request may be fulfilled by one or more tool functions provided by one or more tools in conjunction with said one or more tool service layer functions, and wherein said computer readable instructions for identifying further comprises computer readable instructions for reviewing configuration information describing tool functions capable of being provided by said one or more tools.

22. The computer program of claim 17, wherein said computer readable instructions for identifying further comprises computer readable instructions for reviewing configuration information describing tool service layer functions capable of being provided by said tool service layer.

23. The computer program of claim 17, wherein said computer readable instructions for identifying further comprises computer readable instructions for reviewing configuration information describing workflow definitions.

24. The computer program of claim 17, wherein said tool service request may be fulfilled by one or more tool functions provided by one or more tools in conjunction with said one or more tool service layer functions, and wherein said computer program further comprises computer readable instructions for converting said client request into a format understandable by said one or more tools.

25. A system for fulfilling client tool service requests by utilizing a tool service layer, said system comprising:

means for receiving a tool service request from a client;

means for identifying one or more tool service layer functions capable of being provided by said tool service layer, wherein said identified one or more tool service layer functions are required to fulfill said tool service request; and

means for performing said identified one or more tool service layer functions, thereby fulfilling said client tool service request.

26. The system of claim 25, wherein said tool service request may be fulfilled by one or more tool functions provided by one or more tools in conjunction with said one or more tool service layer functions, and wherein said tool service request does not reference said one or ore tool functions.

27. The system of claim 25, wherein said tool service request does not reference said one or more tool service layer functions.

28. The system of claim 25, wherein said means for identifying further comprises means for identifying a workflow for executing an automation scenario.

29. The system of claim 25, wherein said tool service request may be fulfilled by one or more tool functions provided by one or more tools in conjunction with said one or more tool service layer functions, and wherein said means for identifying further comprises means for reviewing

configuration information describing tool functions capable of being provided by said one or more tools.

30. The system of claim 25, wherein said means for identifying further comprises means for reviewing configuration information describing tool service layer functions capable of being provided by said tool service layer.

31. The system of claim 25, wherein said means for identifying further comprises means for reviewing configuration information describing workflow definitions.

32. The system of claim 25, wherein said tool service request may be fulfilled by one or more tool functions provided by one or more tools in conjunction with said one or more tool service layer functions, and wherein said system further comprises means for converting said client request into a format understandable by said one or more tools.

33. A system for fulfilling client tool service requests comprising:

a processor;

a memory, said memory in communication with said processor, and including:

a tool service layer, configured to receive a tool service request from a client, wherein said tool services layer is configured to identify one or more tool service layer functions required to fulfill said tool service request; and

a tool service component, configured to cause said identified one or more tool service layer functions to be performed by said tool services layer, thereby fulfilling said client tool service request.

34. The system of claim 33, wherein said tool services layer is capable of identifying a workflow for executing an automation scenario.

35. The system of claim 33, wherein said tool services layer is capable of reviewing configuration information describing tool service layer functions capable of being provided.

36. The system of claim 33, wherein said tool services layer is capable of reviewing configuration information describing workflow definitions.